

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT BASED LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT SCHOOL

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**Annotation:** Project-based learning (PBL), though not a novel or revolutionary approach, plays a very important role in education in general and English teaching in particular. In this article, the author discusses the definitions and benefits of PBL.

**Keywords:** Project-based learning, project, English as a foreign language, English learning projects.

### INTRODUCTION

Project-based learning has been investigated in a great number of studies on the global scale over the last decade, but the application of this approach to teaching English as a foreign language in Uzbekistan is still not popular. Project-based learning is a learning method which focuses on the learner; the teacher acts mainly as a facilitator and motivator. PBL emphasizes learning activities that are learner-centered and usually integrated with real world concerns. With a view to achieving great successes in teaching and learning under the credit-hour system, training workers of the twenty-first century standard, PBL is a beneficial approach to be applied at university in Uzbekistan.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

PBL shifts away from the instruction of teacher-centeredness to that of student-centeredness. The purpose of PBL is to foster students' abilities for life long learning through contextualizing learning by presenting them with problems to solve and/or artifacts to create; in doing so, students' motivation and enthusiasm, their problem-solving abilities, research skills, sense of collaborations, resource management skills, longing for communication and information sharing, and language use awareness are progressively evident, and more important, such a process of engaging in various levels of projects may turn their life experiences to advantage.

In language instruction, PBL is a flexible methodology allowing multiple skills to be developed in an integrated, meaningful, ongoing activity. Beckett [3] states that projects are generally thought of as a long-term (several weeks) activity which are part of an instructional method which promotes the simultaneous acquisition of language, content, and skills. A major goal of project-based instruction is comprehensible output which generally occurs both during the project and as the final product of the project.

The variety of definitions has provided the features of PBL. Thomas [2] proposes the five criteria of project-based learning: centrality, driving question, constructive investigations, autonomy, and realism.

1. *PBL projects are central, not peripheral to the curriculum.*
2. *PBL projects are focused on questions or problems that "drive" students to encounter (and struggle with) the central concepts and principles of a discipline.*
3. *Projects involve students in a constructive investigation.*
4. *Projects are student-driven to some significant degree.*
5. *Projects are realistic, not school-like.*

With its distinctive features, PBL has drawn a lot of attention and support from educators, teachers and learners. Research has provided evidence for more of its benefits than drawbacks. We shall discuss the benefits in the following section.

A high degree of planning and organization is a necessity for project-based learning. Thus to implement a PBL project, several key factors should be considered. First, curriculum issues should be taken in account. The goal is students learning core curriculum as they work on the project. The projects is therefore required to have clearly stated goals and to support and demonstrate content learning both in process and product in order to successfully integrate the content learning. The objective which students follow should be supported by project activities, so that the final project could answer the standards defined in the curriculum.

The second factor to be considered is time frame and materials to support deep understanding and engagement. A good project takes over a significant period of time. The timeframe should be organized in a good way to provide each student adequate time for: equal opportunity to participate; interpretation of content, effective collaboration and project development; access to quality subject-matter resources and professional tools for simulation and chip specialization, time for design process, completion of complex tasks and assessment. Collaboration is another factor which need considering. The students should be given opportunities to learn collaboration skills. Collaboration can be in different forms: students' partnership, team projects, cross-group or cross-university projects. In addition, student direction is a key element of the model. Each student should receive opportunities and support to define a project in own terms with a relation to course content; to design effective project documentation and presentation and to engage them in real-world research practices as well as in self- and peer-assessment.

Another factor is the real-world connection. The PBL seeks to connect student projects with the real life. The connection to the worksite problems can be established by content chosen, activities type, product types, and professional design tools used. It is important to arrange opportunities for each student to develop real world practices of communication with a purpose; collaboration/ teamwork, project management,

effective use of feedback. Last but not least, assessment is to be taken into consideration. Student knowledge and competences should be evaluated as a result of project work and adequate assessment should be based on clearly defined standards; student reflection and revision.

These six factors need meticulous consideration if PBL is to be applied. However, it would be not sufficient for students to benefit if no or little attention is paid to how to apply PBL or carry out a PBL project.

### CONCLUSION

In this article the author has presented various definitions of PBL and its benefits. She has also discussed the steps for implementing a PBL project and suggested several English learning projects for students of English. With these projects and the steps for implementing a PBL project, the teachers of English can motivate their students not only inside but also outside class, making full use of the benefits of PBL to help the students well prepare for future in terms of both the English skills and social ones. In the author's view, PBL should be widely applied at university where students need to enhance necessary authentic knowledge and skills for their life and work.

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